

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-20 were pending in this application. According to the February 9, 2006 Final Rejection, claims 1-3, 9-12, and 14-19 were rejected and claims 4-8, 13, and 20 were allowed. Applicants have amended claims 2 and 14 to depend from allowed independent claim 4 and have cancelled claims 1, 3, and 17-19. Accordingly, claims 2, 4-16 and 20 are under consideration. Applicants maintain that the amendments do not introduce any new matter.

Applicants respectfully request this amendment be entered as it raises no new issues, and will place the application in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner is not persuaded that the application is now in condition for allowance, Applicants respectfully request this amendment be entered to place the application in better condition for appeal.

Cancellation of Claims 1, 3, and 17-19

To expedite prosecution of this application, Applicants have cancelled independent claims 1 and 17 and dependent claims 3 and 18-19 without prejudice.

Claims 4-8, 13, and 20 Indicated as Allowed

Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner has indicated that claims 4-8, 13, and 20 are allowed.

Amendments to Claims 2 and 14

Applicants have amended dependent claims 2 and 14 to depend from allowed independent claim 4, rather than cancelled claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that because claims 2, 9-12, and 14-16 now depend directly or indirectly from allowed claim 4, these claims are also allowable.

Rejection of Claims 1-3, 9, and 17 over Spitz in view of Lebby

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 9, and 17 as unpatentable, 35 U.S.C. 103(a), over Spitz et al., patent 6,060,776 (hereinafter Spitz) in view of Lebby et al., patent 5,838,703 (hereinafter Lebby). In view of the cancellation of claims 1, 3, and 17, the rejection of these claims in view of Spitz and Lebby is now moot.

As for dependent claims 2 and 9, because these claims now depend directly or indirectly from allowed claim 4, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are nonobvious in view of Spitz and Lebby.

Rejection of Claims 10-12, 14-16, and 18-19.

The Examiner rejected claims 10-11 as unpatentable, 35 U.S.C. 103(a), over Spitz and Lebby and in further view of Wasmer et al., patent 5,005,069 (hereinafter Wasmer), rejected claim 12 as unpatentable, 35 U.S.C. 103(a), over Spitz, Lebby, and Wasmer and in further view of Yoshinaga et al., patent 5,886,403 (hereinafter Yoshinaga), rejected claim 14, 18, and 19 as unpatentable, 35 U.S.C. 103(a), over Spitz and Lebby and in further view of Barnett et al., patent 6,541,800 (hereinafter Barnett), and rejected claims 15-16 as unpatentable, 35 U.S.C. 103(a), over Spitz, Lebby, and Barnett and in further view of Kagi et al., patent 6,821,613 (hereinafter Kagi).

In view of the cancellation of claims 18-19, the rejection of these claims in view of the cited references is now moot.

Because claims 10-12 and 14-16 now depend directly or indirectly from allowed claim 4, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are nonobvious in view of the cited references.

Conclusion

Since Spitz, Lebby, Barnett, Yoshinaga, Wasmer, and Kagi fail to teach or suggest Applicants' invention as now set forth in claims 2, 9-12, and 14-16, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the Final Rejection, entry of this amendment, and favorable reconsideration and allowance of these claims.

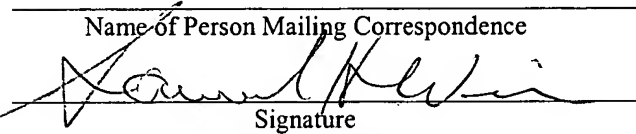
Applicants earnestly believe that this application is now in condition to be passed to issue, and such action is also respectfully requested. However, if the Examiner deems it would

in any way facilitate the prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Applicants' counsel at the number given below.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on April 21, 2006:

Samuel H. Weiner

Name of Person Mailing Correspondence



Signature
April 21, 2006

Date of Signature

SHW/GRF:db

Respectfully submitted,



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